

A
LETTER
TO THE
RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF CHARLEMONT,
ON THE
TELLOGRAPH,
AND ON THE
DEFENCE OF IRELAND.

[Price ONE SHILLING.]



A

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LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF CHARLEMONT

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AND ON THE

DEFENCE OF IRELAND.

BY RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH, Esq.

F. R. S. AND M. R. I. A.

To take the management of any affair of public concern from the man, who has almost brought it to a conclusion, is regarded as the most invidious injustice.

ADAM SMITH.

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1797.

[Price ONE SHILLING.]

LETTER

TO THE

HON. THE EARL OF CHARLEMONT

OF THE

PARLIAMENT

AND OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

IN THE

MONTH OF JANUARY, 1791

BY

JOHN B. BURNES

OF THE CITY OF LONDON, ESQ.

AND

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TO THE

EARL OF CHARLEMONT, &c.

MY LORD,

SHORTLY after I had the honour of seeing you in England, in 1792, I heard that disturbances had broken out in Ireland.—The revolution in France, and the political situation of Ireland had a connection, which could not escape the eye of the most superficial observer. I therefore resolved to return, and to contribute, whatever talents and acquirements I possessed to the common cause. I built and improved, I employed numerous tradesmen and labourers, as if the country were in perfect security; and in the dreadful scenes which afterwards occurred, I have the satisfaction to say no tenant on my estate was ever convicted or ever accused—nor has a defender been found, even amongst my workmen. As a grand juror, a magistrate, and a country gentleman, I endeavoured to perform my duty, and to abide steadily between the extremes of vio-

lence and inaction. When I heard of the French Telegraph a new object arose for my exertions. I recalled to my mind experiments that I had tried so long ago as the year 1767, when I had practised this species of aerial communication; and thinking that it might be peculiarly useful to this country, I constructed some machines with which I conversed, in August 1794, between Pakenham Hall, (the seat of Lord Longford,) and Edgeworthstown. Finding my success equal to my expectations, I was advised by the present Bishop of Ossory, who expected the arrival of Lord Fitzwilliam, to shew my invention to some gentleman, whose opinion would be attended to by administration.—I naturally recurred to the Speaker, with whom I had been bred up, and with whose friendship I had been always honoured; he immediately understood and approved the contrivance, gave me the warmest encouragement, and during the months of September, October, and November, he assisted me in trying experiments, and in constructing the plan of a vocabulary; a work of no small difficulty and labour.

In February, 1795, the Bishop of Ossory at my request presented a memorial to Lord Fitzwilliam, which I am informed was approved of, and which would in all probability have been attended to, if Lord Fitzwilliam had remained in Ireland.

The Speaker had advised me to prepare a chain
of

of Tellographs * from his house to Dublin, and in consequence I had erected machines at Collon, Bel-lewstown, Ratoath, and Mulhuddar, and under his auspices, in spring 1795, I presented the following memorial to Lord Camden.

No.

* In November and December, 1794, the following paragraphs, written by some person unknown to me, appeared in the Irish and English newspapers.

Drogheda, November 19th.

The Right Hon. the Speaker of the House of Commons, has been the first in this country to prove the expediency of using the Telegraph; on Saturday last one was erected on Mount Oriel, near the speaker's at Collon, and another on the hill of Skreene, in the county of Meath, fifteen miles distant, where each party took their station, and when the necessary signals were made, they communicated to, and answered each other at that distance, in the space of five minutes.

The whole apparatus is nothing more than a triangular stand of about 14 feet in height, placed on an eminence, at the top of which is fixed an index, which turns on a swivel: the index has eight different situations in the circle it describes, signifying the eight figures, viz. 0. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. The person at the corresponding station, taken suppose fifteen miles off, can clearly perceive by the help of a good telescope, every situation of the index, and each party at each situation is furnished with a glossary or dictionary, to explain the signals, and thus the ideas of the one, may in a few minutes be communicated to the other.

In the Star, October 10, 1796, the following description of the *new* French Telegraph appeared. It is obvious that it is constructed upon the very same principles as mine, described in the paragraph, which I have just quoted.

“ THE TELEGRAPH.—A new machine of this description
“ has been lately erected on the top of the Pavilion of Unity,

A PROPOSAL,

Addressed to His EXCELLENCY the LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND,

For the establishment of a corps of men, to convey secret and swift intelligence.

IN the present state of Europe, and of Ireland in particular, it is unnecessary to expatiate upon the

“ which forms a part of the palace of the Thuilleries, and
“ which is to communicate with Germany, by a corresponding
“ chain extending as far as Landau.

“ In the erection of this machine, which differs materially
“ from that of Chappe, every attention has been paid to its
“ improvement.—It now consists of a large beam, painted
“ black, and fixed horizontally on four large posts; attached
“ to the main beam are five distinct arms, similar to the secondary arms of the other Telegraph.—There are two other
“ arms attached to the two central posts, the former five have
“ each eight positions, two vertical, four inclined, and two horizontal, &c. &c.

“ The number of changes, though apparently beyond the
“ circumstances of the case, will enable the conductors of the
“ machine to substitute words for letters, and thus not only to
“ accelerate this communication but to make it useful, not only
“ to the purposes of government, but to those of individuals on
“ particular occasions.”

The idea of my Tellograph, is to point out divisions by a hand or index on an imaginary circle—no change in the form can conceal this principle. *Tellograph* is the name I give to my machine, to denote, that it conveys words instead of letters.—An engraving and description of it will soon appear in the Transactions of the R. I. Academy.

utility

utility of speedy, and secret intelligence ; it is sufficient to say, that if the eye of government can be enabled to see the whole country like a Map before it, and if its orders can be conveyed by day or night, in a few minutes to every part of the kingdom, its energy must be increased beyond the limits of ordinary speculation ; and if such a mode of communication be extended to Great Britain, another incalculable source of advantage would be opened to both kingdoms.—If instant notice can be given of alarm upon the coasts, or of domestic disturbance, the force of government can be directed to the point of danger ; unfounded rumours can be stopped in their progress, and incipient combinations can be broken, before they increase to any formidable magnitude ; inferior depredations would become less frequent, as offenders could scarcely escape from punishment—almost as soon as an offence was committed it would be known at every bridge and outlet of the district where it happened ; a description of the offender would meet him wherever he went, and a force would every where be ready to arrest him.

If with great celerity of communication entire secrecy can be connected ; if it be impossible that any person concerned in the business, can decypher the intelligence which he is employed to convey ; if the mode of communication can be indefinitely varied without difficulty or confusion ; if the advantages of such an establishment extend to peace as

well as war, in preserving domestic security, in promoting the exchange of commodities, in facilitating the business of insurance, in preventing frauds in lotteries, in equalizing the prices of grain, and of other merchandize ; and, in short, if they may be felt in every intercourse of society, there can remain but one object to be considered—the expence of the establishment: this must vary with the extent of the correspondence.

Perhaps thirty permanent stations would be sufficient for the whole kingdom.—In hazy weather, portable machines may be detached from these stations to keep up the communication. Where it is necessary that the permanent stations should be tenable against musketry or sudden violence, each station would cost about three hundred pounds ; where temporary establishments should be thought sufficient, half the expence might be saved.

The men who are employed should be under military discipline, to secure their punctuality and obedience ; but as they can be employed in the place of other soldiers, in assistance of the civil power, their expence should not be charged exclusively to this establishment.

To conduct this business, Mr. Edgeworth proposes to raise a corps of men, under any denomination that may be thought proper, and to have them instructed, not only in the practice of conveying intelligence,

telligence, but in the art of throwing up field works, and in the management of light arms.

Mr. Edgeworth has, at no small expence, both of time and money, brought his plan to such perfection, that he is willing to establish a correspondence between any places his Excellency shall point out, and to suffer the whole loss, if his plan shall be found deficient either in secrecy or expedition.

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH,
F. R. S. AND M. R. I. A.

September 14th, 1794.

Presented to Lord CAMDEN, May 3rd, 1795.

After his Excellency had glanced his eye over the title of my memorial, he was pleased to say, that such an establishment did not appear to him necessary, but that he would consult my friend, the Speaker; from whom I afterwards heard, that my plan would not be pursued. Last September, when the alarm of an invasion resounded in every part of the kingdom, as soon as I heard that preparations were actually making against such an event, I wrote the following letter to Lord Carhampton; who had seen the Tellograph at Edgeworthstown, and had expressed his approbation of its performance.

No. II.

MY LORD,

It is rumoured that an invasion of this country is thought possible, and that means of defence are
under

under consideration.—I beg leave to request that your lordship will offer my services, to convey intelligence from the coast* to government, at my own expence,

It is my duty, or perhaps my whim, to wish that my small skill as an engineer should be really useful; and I apply to your lordship in particular to make this offer in my name, because when I had the honour of seeing you, you appeared to think that the country required protection.

I have the honour to be my lord, &c.

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH.

September 8th, 1796.

No. III.

LORD CARHAMPTON'S answer to my letter was as follows.

DEAR SIR,

Dublin, September 6th.

IF you will be good enough to come up to town, my Lord Lieutenant will be glad to converse with you on the subject of the Tellograph, and I trust you will be employed.

I am, dear Sir,

with great truth,

your faithful servant,

CARHAMPTON.

* The coast of Wicklow was at that time supposed to be the most in danger.

On the twelfth, I waited on the Lord Lieutenant, who conversed with me some time upon the subject; his Excellency asked me what would be the expence of a communication between Dublin and Cork, and in what time it could be completed?—I answered—that with the assistance of machinery, which I had ready, and which was at the service of government, a *temporary* establishment might be formed in a month, and kept up for a year, at the expence of £.700.—His Excellency desired to know whether such an establishment could not be formed in less than a month?—I replied, that a prudent man would not promise it.—His Excellency then desired me to prepare for an experiment before him; the time for which, he said, should be shortly appointed.—His Excellency informed me that Mr. Pelham had engaged a person belonging to the Admiralty Telegraph, to come over to establish it here, and he was so good as to add, that he was sorry my proposal in 1795 had not been accepted.

I returned my acknowledgments to his Excellency, but with respect to entering into any competition with the Admiralty Telegraph, I assured him, that such had never been my intention; I had no design to interfere with any other person's interest or invention, my proposal related solely to this country, and my wish was purely *to make myself useful in the manner best suited to my situation and capacity.*

After this conversation, I returned to the coun-

try, and with the utmost expedition completed seven new Tellographs, of an improved construction.—Those, which I had first employed, were intended for fixed stations, and therefore were more cumbersome, and required stands of great solidity.—My new machines were contrived to shut up like umbrellas, and were furnished with portable stands.—They were of different sizes: 6, 10, 11, 12, 20 feet; to shew by experiments at different distances, that a Tellograph could be *read off* with a telescope, upon any spot which could be barely seen with the naked eye.

No. IV.

I wrote the following letter to Mr. PELHAM.

SIR, *Edgeworthstown, September 19th, 1796.*

IN obedience to Lord Camden's commands, I have prepared Tellographs, with which I am ready to try an experiment before his Excellency, whenever he thinks proper; I have also collected some machines, which I used in my first trials, and which I could employ immediately, to form a temporary communication between Cork and Dublin.

I suppose, that with a corps of four hundred men, and with an expence of four or five thousand pounds, a communication might be established between Dublin and the following places, Brayhead, Wicklow, Wexford, Waterford, Dungarvan, Youghal, Cork,

Cork, Limerick, Galway, Sligo, Loughfoyle, Belfast, and Carlingford, besides an extensive inland correspondence; part of this corps might be employed in keeping up a speedy intercourse between the troops of a cordon with my portable Tellograph, which a man can carry, and can set up in five minutes, and which is legible in weather when other Telegraphs are ineffectual.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,
Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH.

No. V.

To this Letter Mr. PELHAM replied.

SIR, *Phœnix Park, September 26th, 1796.*

I HAVE received the honour of your letter, stating, that you have prepared some Tellographs in obedience to the Lord Lieutenant's commands, and that you were ready to make an experiment before his Excellency. I am to inform you, that his Excellency will be very glad to see the experiment at any time that may be most convenient to you; and I shall be obliged to you if you will give me a day's notice. The end of this week would be an eligible time if it suited you.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

T. PELHAM.

I imme-

I immediately went up to town, and I was desired to wait on Mr. Pelham, at his house in the Park, on the 2d of October.—The Secretary at war and the Secretary for the civil department were at breakfast with him. He asked to see the portable reconnoitring Tellograph, which I had brought with me, and a specimen of my vocabulary. Though I had no person with me who understood the management of the machines but my servant, Mr. Pelham desired to see them tried. Mr. Cooke and Mr. Elliot, the two secretaries, whom I did not know, obligingly offered to assist me. They took one of the Tellographs to the * butts in the Park, and Mr. Pelham received a message from them in the lawn before his house.

Mr. Pelham, and the gentlemen who were with him, expressed much satisfaction at the experiment, and he informed me that the Lord Lieutenant was to go the next day to Collon, and asked me if I could meet him there.

My machines were at this time on their road to

* When the two Secretaries had taken possession of the butts for their experiment, they were arrested by a centinel, who considered them as persons that must have some evil design in view, from the strange apparatus they had with them.—It was in vain that the Secretary at war declared who he was, the centinel would not liberate him till he was convinced of his identity.

The laughter which this occasioned, and the good humour with which these gentlemen behaved, made me form agreeable hopes as to my future transactions with them.

Dublin,

Dublin, I dispatched a servant to take them across the country by night, to Collon; two of my sons carried machines to Bellewstown, eleven Irish miles distance from Collon.

Notwithstanding the coldness of the weather, and a brisk storm, the next morning Lord Camden had the complaisance to remain two hours on a bleak hill to see the experiment. It succeeded to my wishes, and his Excellency was pleased to say, that he was entirely satisfied. He further assured me *that no other Telegraph should be employed in this country in preference to mine.*

At Mr. Pelham's desire, I sent a written proposal for a Tellographic communication, of which the following is a copy.

No. VI.

MEMORIAL,

PRESENTED OCTOBER 6TH, 1796.

Mr. Edgeworth will undertake to convey intelligence from Dublin to Cork, and back to Dublin, by means of fourteen or fifteen different stations, at the rate of one hundred pounds per annum, for each station, as long as government shall think proper; and from Dublin to any other place at the same rate, in proportion to the distance.—Provided,

vided, that when government chooses to discontinue the business, they shall pay one year's contract, over and above the current expence, as some compensation for the prime cost of the apparatus, and the trouble of the first establishment.

This memorial was accompanied with the following letter to Mr. PELHAM.

No. VII.

SIR,

Collon, October 1796.

I ENCLOSE a proposal for establishing a Tellograph between Dublin and Cork, &c. that something specific may be immediately before you.

I was advised not to distract attention by more proposals than one, and it was suggested, that if a Tellographic corps were established, the men at each station would be under the command of any officer who might be in the neighbourhood, which would interrupt my proceedings, and would put my conduct, and responsibility, into the hands of other persons.—This might surely be obviated by general orders from the Commander in chief.—I cannot therefore help thinking, that it would be best to establish a corps of men in stations, tenable against a mob and against musketry.—That one company should be employed for attending the
army

army, for reconnoitring, &c. &c. That this company should be changed from time to time, to relieve the centinels on watch.

The whole establishments, independently of the corps, would, if the stations were only common houses, cost about four or five thousand pounds.— If they were made tenable, the expence would be about six or seven thousand pounds, to convey intelligence to every part of the kingdom which should be necessary. — If a civil establishment is adopted, it appears to me, that the men, who must protect it, would be an additional expence—on a military plan, the men who protect, might conduct it.

For my own part, I am sensible that you comprehend the whole of the business—that you see the great difference that there must be between a partial and a general plan, *and I am perfectly willing to pursue, without reserve, any plan that you shall approve.*

I beg leave to offer my acknowledgments for the goodness of his Excellency, and for your liberality and kindness.

I have the honour to be, &c.

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH.

During the conversation that passed at Collon, Mr. Pelham told me, that the Duke of York had expressed a wish for a reconnoitring Telegraph, and that he thought mine was exactly what his

B

Royal

Royal Highness wanted.—By the 10th I had a new portable Tellograph, constructed in the handsomest manner in my power; it contained a telescope in its axletree, so as to be manageable by a single person. Mr. Pelham examined this at his house in the Park, and did me the honour to accept of it as a present.—He asked me, if I had any friend to whom it would be an object to present it in his name to the Duke of York.—I mentioned Mr. Bridgeman Edgeworth my ward, who belongs to the Woolwich Academy.—Mr. Pelham lamented, that sending for Mr. Bridgeman Edgeworth from England, to instruct him in the management of the machine, would waste much time.—My son Lovell, who was present at this conversation, offered to go over to England, to teach his relation what might perhaps be of advantage to him.—Mr. Pelham immediately proposed, that government should defray Mr. Lovell Edgeworth's expences—this my son in the most proper manner declined, by saying, “that even his father should not defray his expences upon such an occasion.”—He was thanked, and applauded, and as soon as with the utmost industry another Tellograph was completed, he was dispatched to London with a letter from Mr. Pelham to the Duke of York, a letter to Colonel Brownrigg his Royal Highness's Secretary, and with other letters of recommendation. In the whole of this business, I was much captivated with Mr. Pelham's politeness, and I had sufficient opportunity of seeing the clearness and extent of his understanding. Upon a subject entirely

new to him, he became immediately acquainted with the whole detail of my machinery—with the construction of the vocabulary—with the difference, which should be observed between a vocabulary for common use, and one which might be constructed for an universal language—and with all the important purposes to which such an invention could be applied.—He informed me that he had written to Lord Grenville, to recommend an establishment of the Tellograph between England and Ireland, and added, “*That if the English ministry did not concur in such an establishment, it was still in the power of government here, to do what they thought proper.*”

On the 28th of October, Mr. Bridgeman Edgeworth and my son obtained an audience of the Duke of York; and on the next day they shewed the portable reconnoitring Tellograph in Kensington gardens to his Royal Highness, who expressed his approbation in a most gracious manner. Colonel Brownrigg, the Duke of York’s Secretary, engaged my son to meet him the next day at the Admiralty, that he and the Duke’s Aid-de-camp might learn the management of the machine, and the use of the vocabulary.—Sir William Fawcett was present; he seemed much pleased, and gave it as his opinion, that the reconnoitring Tellograph might be employed in the West Indies to great advantage.

Before my son left London, Colonel Brownrigg presented him, from the Duke of York, with a

handsome refracting telescope, upon which he was permitted to inscribe his Royal Highness's name.

During this time I had no doubt, that arrangements were making for an establishment of my Tellograph in Ireland, the idea of extending it to Scotland to meet the English Telegraph had been taken up by Mr. Pelham ; but as to this country, I had never supposed that any thing was in suspense, except the mode of the establishment, whether it should be civil or military ? —As soon as an adjournment of parliament took place, I went to town and waited upon Mr. Pelham —he was much hurried with business, but from the moment I saw him, I could perceive that the views of government had changed, and after a few words of conversation he promised to write to me, and the following is a copy of his letter.

No. VIII.

Dublin Castle, November 17th, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

THE Lord Lieutenant communicated to Lord Spencer your plan for establishing a communication of intelligence between Cork and Dublin, and between Dublin and Belfast and Donaghadee, by means of a Tellograph of your invention, and requested to know whether such an establishment would be of such advantage to Great Britain, as to induce Lord Spencer to encourage the adoption of it.

Lord

Lord Spencer and the Board of Admiralty did not think it would be of such importance, as to induce them to encourage his Excellency in making the experiment. His Excellency thinking the invention a very ingenious one, and wishing to shew every degree of attention to you in the business, consulted the Commander in Chief upon the advantages to be derived from such an establishment for the communication of intelligence within the kingdom; and not receiving more encouragement from him, than he had done from the Admiralty in England, his Excellency has directed me to say, that much as he admires the invention, and the motives which engaged the author to apply his talents to this object, he does not see any purpose in this country, for which he could be warranted in incurring the expence.

The utility of a Tellograph may hereafter be considered greater; but I trust that at all events, those talents which have been directed to this pursuit will be turned to some other object, and that the public will have the benefit of that extraordinary activity and zeal, which I have witnessed on this occasion, in some other institution, which I am sure that the ingenuity of the author will not require much time to suggest.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,
 dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

T. PELHAM.

No. IX.

Mr. EDGEWORTH'S answer.

Edgeworthstown, November 21st, 1796.

SIR,

WHEN I had the honor of seeing you, I stated, that my Lord Carhampton's opinion was, *that I should be employed*; which will appear by the enclosed copy of his Lordships letter of the 6th of September *.

What new circumstances have occurred to lessen alarm, or make my services unacceptable, I am at a loss to conjecture. My invention however has been adopted at the Admiralty, by the Duke of York's Chaplain, with such slight alteration as cannot blind the public, to whose judgment I shall soon submit the whole transaction.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH.

I have, my Lord, in a short and plain narrative, laid before your Lordship and the public, the whole of what has passed between government and me relative to the Tellograph; and I shall now beg leave to make a few remarks upon the subject.

In 1795, when my proposal † was presented to

* No. III.

† No. I.

Lord Camden, the answer which I received gave me *no encouragement*; his Excellency saw no necessity at that time for such an establishment: this was a distinct answer, of which I had no reason to complain; but in September, 1796, when Mr. Pelham had engaged a person from England, to bring over the Admiralty Telegraph to this country, when that person had actually arrived, it was plain that government had changed their opinion with regard to the utility of such an establishment, and when I was sent for by Lord Camden, and desired by his Excellency to prepare Tellographs for an experiment before him, when he had inquired from me an estimate of the expence of a temporary establishment for immediate use, and had particularly been earnest with respect to the time within which it could be completed, had I not reason to suppose, that nothing but a proof of the practicability of my proposal was wanting? When a nobleman of high honour and superior abilities had written to me "that he trusted, I should be employed *," when Mr. Pelham † had desired me to bring up to town the machines which I had prepared, some of which were expressly mentioned ‡ as being intended for a communication from Dublin to Cork, when the simplicity of the machinery, and the impenetrable secrecy of the mode of communication were applauded by every member of administration, who had seen them—and when my invention was finally approved of by the

* No. II.

† No. IV.

‡ No. V.

Lord Lieutenant himself, who gave it in the handsomest manner a decided preference to any that he had heard of, was I too sanguine in concluding, that the general question of expediency had been previously considered?—Did it appear in any degree probable, that gentlemen should take and give so much trouble about a thing which they did not mean to pursue?—Had the incompetency of the invention, or the *extravagance* of its expence, been the reasons assigned for the rejection of my proposal, and had it appeared that a better or a cheaper mode of communication than mine had been at the command of administration, their conduct would have been in some degree justifiable.—But the contrivance was approved of; and the expence was not one fourth of what the government in England paid for the Admiralty Telegraph. That the expence could not have been the real objection, is evident from this single circumstance—Mr. Pelham had been informed of the expence of the Admiralty Telegraph, and had notwithstanding brought over a person from the Admiralty, on purpose to establish a communication between Cork and Dublin.

The expence of the English Telegraph between Portsmouth and London, a distance of fifty-six Irish miles, is three thousand pounds a year.—My offer for an establishment between Dublin and Cork, a distance of one hundred and twenty Irish miles, was upon an estimate of one thousand four hundred pounds per annum. At the rate of the English
Telegraph

Telegraph it would have cost six thousand six hundred pounds—a sum for which, with a very small addition, I would have established Tellographs at every important station upon the coast.

I do not mean to assert that government ever made me a *positive promise*, but if any doubt can remain whether government gave me encouragement to proceed, let us reflect upon the character and conduct of Mr. Pelham.—Would he have suffered my reconnoitring Tellograph to be taken to England, where, as it resembled in miniature my other machines, it would subject them to imitation *; or would he have permitted Mr. Lovell Edgeworth to have gone to London, on purpose to have it presented to the Duke of York, if he had not intended that my plan should be adopted in this kingdom? Mr. Pelham in his letter to Colonel Brownrigg expressly mentioned, that my son went for no other purpose to England; and to me he expressed in distinct terms, that if the English administration should not concur in the scheme of communicating intelligence from London to Dublin, “it would still be in the power of government here, to do

* By the same post which brought Mr. Pelham's letter (page 20) I received a letter from London, which informed me, that a Tellograph upon the same principle as mine was just set up at the Admiralty by the Duke of York's Chaplain. Since these sheets went to the press I have learned, that the machine which was then erected, had been contrived some weeks before mine had been taken to England.

“ what they pleased in the business.”—I could scarcely after what had passed suppose, that what they pleased was *nothing*.—For it must be observed, that no attempt was made to accommodate the business in any manner to my feelings. I had offered to establish a communication from the coast to Dublin at my own expence *,—of this offer no notice was taken: I had already, as was known to government, expended £500: as much more would have erected a *temporary* establishment (for perhaps a year) to Cork; and by this trifling complaisance, the utility of my invention might have been fairly tried, and the most prudential government upon earth, could not accuse itself of extravagance in being partner with a private gentleman in an experiment, which had with inferior apparatus, and at four times the expence, been tried and approved of in France and England.

I must also remark, that I had carefully avoided all competition with the Admiralty Telegraph; my proposals were confined to Ireland †, and the idea of meeting the English Telegraph at Portpatrick was a secondary consideration, which might, if a national establishment took place within this kingdom, be adopted at a fortnight's notice.

The attempt to throw the rejection of my proposal upon the Commander in Chief, is best an-

* No. I.

† No. VII.

swered by his own letter; in which he tells me,
 " that on the day upon which he sent for me by
 " the Lord Lieutenant's command, he had found
 " his Excellency and Admiral Kingsmill consulting
 " on the expediency of sending for a Telegraph
 " from England; that he warmly recommended
 " my being employed in preference to any other
 " person, but that *the taking up originally the idea*
 " *of Telegraphs, and giving it up, were both unknown*
 " *to him.*"

As to Mr. Pelham, I think he has been obliged to act against his feelings; for besides the politeness of his conduct to me, his letter * is flattering in the extreme—some parts of it might from another person be considered as ironical; but I firmly believe, that it was written with kindness.—He desires me to turn my talents to some other scheme for the public good, thinking (I sincerely hope) that my views are directed to that honest purpose.—But he forgot, that all my former efforts had been rendered ineffectual by causes which I could not counteract, and that in any new pursuit for the benefit of the public, I could expect nothing but unavailing labour, fruitless expence, and irretrievable loss of time.—Fortune has enabled me to bear the loss of a considerable sum, without inconvenience; but had I been poor, I should not have met with more consideration.

* No. VIII.

Figure to yourself, my Lord—for you can feel for your inferiors—the despair of an ingenious, friendless man, who had bestowed the bread of his family in perfecting a project, which ought to have been adopted for its utility; figure to yourself such a man, lured on beyond the bounds of prudence, by the fallacious hopes of remuneration, receiving at last a cold negative, and dismissed to wretchedness and a prison.—If this publication can save one such man from ruin, my expence, and time, and labour, have been well bestowed.

Some years ago, a Minister in England (the story would suit many of his successors) sent for an ingenious man, to whose talents he had been indebted, and advised him to learn Spanish. — After three months labour, the pale student presented himself, and modestly hinted, that he had made a considerable progress in that language; but instead of being appointed secretary to a Spanish embassy, or consul to some Spanish port, he was *politely* told, “ that he was prepared to taste the sublime pleasure of reading *Don Quixote* in the original.”

I am not so utterly unacquainted with courts, as not to be aware, that I have neglected some of those arts which are supposed (I hope unjustly) to be essential to success;—I was early advised by an experienced friend, to leave the cutting and carving of the business to government; if I had connected this advice with what I have heard upon other
other

other occasions, and instead of labouring to show economy and disinterestedness, had I introduced my Tellograph in the form of a lucrative job, in which there might be good picking for others, I might have increased the number of my *friends*, and have gratified those who are in power, by an opportunity of increasing patronage.—To him, who is not in Parliament, every step in public business is arduous.—When Lewis XIV. asked a lady, “how he could find the way to her chamber?”—she answered —“ Par l’Eglise.” — The shortest way perhaps to the Castle, is through the House of Commons.—Independently of all interested or ambitious motives, there seems to be some strange delight in political corruption. There are men who imagine that there is something humourous, ingenuous, liberal, and graceful, in the frank avowal of venality.

I once applied to a gentleman (who had niched himself comfortably in a seat at a lucrative Board) for his assistance upon a certain business then before Parliament—“ Tell me honestly, my good friend,” said he, “ is it a job?—If it is, I will attend—if it is not, the thing must make its way by its *merits*.”

Many will perhaps be surprised, that after my opportunities of learning *better*, I should not have availed myself of my knowledge of the world—To these I can only reply in the language of a persecuted

secuted Statesman, who, among corrupt Courtiers, had the misfortune to preserve his integrity,

“ Il seroit aisé de vous imiter, mais il éstoit difficile de s’y résoudre.”

I am impatient, my Lord, to finish this part of my subject, that I may lay aside the constant repetition of “ the most disgusting of all the pronouns *,” which has hitherto been the unsuccessful hero of my tale.— But he who puts his name to what he writes, respects the liberty of the press, and sets an example, which, if it were followed, would discountenance the effusions of anonymous malice and scurrility.

Whoever appeals to the public, encounters a dangerous dilemma ;—if he expect the sympathy of mankind, he must not only convince them that he is injured, but that he feels the injury ; for it is a contradiction in terms to talk of sympathizing with him who does not *feel*. On the contrary, if a man shews quick sensibility, the warmth of his resentment alarms the caution of his readers ; it is supposed that objects are magnified through the mist of passion, and it is believed that a man with the best intentions in the world is not to be trusted, and should not trust himself, whilst he is under the influence of any violent emotion. To avoid these extremes is not difficult to him who is really interested for the

* Gibbon’s Life.

public, who is perfectly happy in his private life, and who is disappointed more in what concerns others than in what touches himself. Mankind will justly share the indignation which he feels for the desertion of their interest, and will go beyond his resentment for any neglect with which one who wished to have been their benefactor has been treated. My motto expresses what I think the public will feel on my account.

I shall now endeavour to shew, that the object which I pursued was national, and that the nation has a right to inquire why it was laid aside.

When I speak of Tellographs as serious means of protection, I must explain myself, and I hope I may be pardoned if I should repeat any ideas I have already suggested in my memorials, because I have observed, that memorials as well as prefaces are seldom read.

In this country, objects of science have not been much attended to, but the genius of the nation is now awake; and the necessity of employing every resource of art must soon be acknowledged.—Suppose that two or three different squadrons menaced the coasts of Ireland, or perhaps the coasts of both countries, what must be the first wish of an intelligent General?—Surely to know as soon as possible the real object of the enemy.—It is commonly supposed, that the South-east coast of the kingdom would

would be the object of invasion; the West and Northern coasts appear to me to be the most in danger. I had formed this opinion long before I saw the same idea expressed in an excellent pamphlet "*On the Defence of Ireland*," which has been withheld, I do not know for what reason, from the public. Whatever difference of opinion there may be, as to the parts of our coast which require most to be guarded, the enemy would, at all events, endeavour to effect a landing where it was the least expected; and would by every possible means distract our attention.—Our having the certainty of intelligence, must either oblige them to concentrate their force, or would baffle any attempt to divide ours.—It has been suggested, and believed, that foreign enemies have artfully endeavoured to foment insurrections amongst the people of Ireland.—Had any such plan been concerted to distract the country by exciting disturbances amongst the populace, would not a speedy communication of intelligence between every part of the kingdom and government, be one of the most useful means of counteracting such designs?—Apprized of the real circumstances and extent of the danger, ministers would be able to regulate their conduct accordingly; proper assistance might be afforded to the civil power, and the provincial forces might rapidly be collected at the necessary point.

Are these objects of no consequence? Does the security of Ireland depend merely upon the physical

fical force, which can be collected in its defence?
 And what part of the physical force of Ireland can
 be relied upon for its defence?—one half?—one
 third?—one tenth of its male inhabitants?—Surely
 if force is to be relied upon, that force must require
 skill to direct, and ingenuity to increase it, nor
 should any resource of human invention be neg-
 lected, which promises even problematical or re-
 mote advantages!—Is the government of Ireland
 afraid, that too many applications of this sort should
 be made by Gentlemen?—Is the attention of the
 kingdom too much turned to science?—Perhaps
 the serpent by which the ancients personified inven-
 tion, is one of that species which will not live upon
 Irish ground.—To object to the expence of six or
 seven thousand pounds, and the employment of
 three or four hundred men, upon an object of na-
 tional importance, is to raise the value of money
 higher, and to sink the value of protection lower
 than has been yet attempted by any Statesman, *who*
was liable to responsibility.

Of late it has been the policy of government to
 affect alarm; it was during one of these fits either
 of real or pretended apprehension, that Ministers
 expressed such an earnest desire to have a Tello-
 graph established in this kingdom.—A month ap-
 peared to the Lord Lieutenant too long a time to
 allow for the completion of such an establishment
 between Dublin and Cork!—A month passed away,
 the danger continued the same, but the means of
 C defence,

defence, which had been so anxiously fought, became "*unnecessary*."

The most favourable supposition, by which we can account for the conduct of the Irish government in this business is, that a superior influence in England forbade our administration to proceed.—If this be the fact, I can only deplore their humiliating state of tutelage.

It must be mortifying to a Viceroy, who comes over to Ireland with enlarged views, and benevolent intentions, to discover, when he attempts to act for himself, that he is peremptorily checked by foreign influence; that a circle is chalked round him, beyond which he cannot, or he fancies that he cannot move.

It is in vain that we attempt to study the character of our Governors, if in fact their dispositions have no influence on their conduct.—In the succession of Vice-Royalty in Ireland, there is an automatic uniformity; there is no change but in the form, that holds the delegated sceptre;—perhaps this change is sufficient to amuse the credulous populace, but such of the spectators, as are curious to know the machinery of the spectacle, must look for the hand that holds the wires, and listen to the voice that speaks behind the scenes.

It is not impossible, that the English government

may have been glad to take advantage of an alarm of invasion in this kingdom, to induce the gentlemen of Ireland to arm themselves at * their own expence in its defence.—In this point of view we may account for the ostentatious display of anxiety in Administration, for the eagerness with which a Tellograph was apparently desired at one period, and coolly rejected at another. The Yeomanry were *to be raised* in the first instance, and after the Yeomanry were raised, and the manœuvre had answered its purpose, no farther ceremony was necessary towards an individual.—A complimentary letter was thought a sufficient “*amende honorable*,” on the part of Ministers.

The enlightened author of the pamphlet “On the Defence of Ireland,” which I have before mentioned, strongly recommends the plan of raising corps of Yeomanry; and high praise is unquestionably due to the authors of the measure, provided no insidious design lurks beneath fair pretences.—If it were of no other use, it will pledge gentlemen to remain in the country and defend it: it is a measure suited to the genius of the nation; from the peasant to the peer there is a strong portion of military spirit, mantling in the veins of Irishmen.—This spirit has been put in motion, and if it be directed with proper skill and caution, it may be the

* Besides the private expence of the officers, the whole establishment must be paid for by Parliament, *independently* of the Army and Militia.

salvation of the country: but then it must not be relied upon for services to which it is inadequate: the different corps of Yeomanry in the capital, the finest body of men perhaps that exists in Ireland, are in their formation and their spirit the same to all intents and purposes, as the Volunteers of truly glorious memory; their local and professional situations must however be considered, when we look up to them for protection against a foreign enemy.—To protect property and their unarmed fellow-citizens, from personal violence and rapine, they are *more* than competent; but it would be a most absurd attempt to oppose them to an invading enemy. If the merchants shut up their counting houses, tradesmen their shops, if men of every occupation rush from the city to the camp, if the desk and bar are forsaken for the sword, if the astonished client exclaims,

“Balked are the courts, and contest is no more,”

can we suppose, that such enthusiasm would be useful or could be durable? or can we imagine that property would be more secure in a populous city, where none were left to protect it?—In the country to collect the Yeomanry into armies, or to invite them by the powerful spirit of emulation to the coasts, would be still more fatal—greater danger would be incurred, than if property never had been regularly armed. Most certainly the proper employment of such a force is in the protection of whatever might tempt the hand of rapine.—With
such

such internal security as Yeomanry can ensure, with the trained Militia, and a *disciplined* army, Ireland might mock invasion.

Whether any attempt silently to convert the militia into fencibles *dare* be made in Ireland, I will not venture to foretel; that it has been thought of, I will not hesitate to assert. Were this fatal design to be pursued, were the nation to believe, that our Yeomanry is the same as that glorious army of Volunteers which, under your command, my Lord, withered the hopes of France, the country would be undone:—for in the hour of danger, a British Minister dares not leave a regiment in Ireland, which might be looked for in Great Britain.—The troops of the line in England will be largely drafted for the West Indies, which are obviously, in the eyes of the Minister, the most valuable appendages of the British empire.—Were Ireland, in consequence of these measures, to be abandoned to the protection of Fencibles and Yeomanry, no human sagacity could foresee the consequences.

I hope that my opinion with respect to the Yeomanry * has been distinctly expressed. I approve highly of the institution, and of the motives, which animate the gentlemen who compose it; but I de-

* I must differ with the author of the pamphlet to which I have alluded, in one particular. He thinks the clothing of Yeomanry, of no consequence.—On the contrary, I believe, to allure the people, military uniform is essential.

precate an improper use of them.—I dread lest it should become a national boast, that we can defend ourselves, and lest that boast should be believed in England, and should be too justly appreciated in France.

No mode of defence, however, can possibly be adopted, which might not derive essential advantages, from a system of speedy and universal intelligence: whether we consider the internal police of the country, or precaution against an invading enemy, such a system must be of considerable importance.—The actual establishment of Telegraphs in two powerful nations in time of war, sufficiently protects the principle from being stigmatized as visionary. That it would be immediately useful in this kingdom must be apparent from analogy, and from observation; the opinion of some of the best informed men in Ireland, is decidedly in favour of a Tellographic establishment * in this country —The

* I shall quote only the authority of the Speaker—can I quote a better?

The following is an extract from a letter which I received from him, a few days after Lord Carhampton wrote to me, to say that the Lord Lieutenant wished to speak to me, on the subject of the Tellograph.

“ I am happy that Lord Carhampton has prevailed on the
 “ Lord Lieutenant to send for you—for I am persuaded Tele-
 “ graphic communication is essentially necessary, and so far
 “ as I understand other Telegraphs, I am convinced yours is
 “ the most effectual.”

great

great expence, which the English Ministry have without hesitation bestowed upon the Admiralty Telegraph, demonstrates clearly the value they set upon such a mode of communication in England.—Are we to suppose that a British Minister thinks that too dear for Ireland which can be obtained at less than half price?—Or is any national establishment for the defence of this country, which costs a shilling, to be deemed extravagant by a foreign financier?—Are the supplies liberally granted by our Parliament to be purposely *fenced round* with limiting clauses, to appropriate the money raised upon the people to the uttermost penny, lest any sum should remain which might be disposed of, for the advantage of the nation at large *?—This is treating us in the usual style which England has assumed towards her colonial dependencies.

In what light Ireland is sometimes considered by Englishmen, we may learn from the following passage in one of Gibbon's letters to Lord Sheffield †.—“Of Ireland, I know nothing—and while I am writ-

* The sums of money permitted to be laid out, or, as I have heard some financiers express it, *sunk* in canals and public buildings, are an exception in point of fact: but they are no exception as to the wishes of the Government.—So many members of Parliament are interested in canals, that a Chancellor of the Exchequer, let him grumble as he might, could not resist.—In this the will of the people has been effective.—Whether Ireland has been benefitted by this act of its own, requires no answer.

† Gibbon's Life.

“ing the decline of a great empire, I have not leisure to attend to the affairs of a remote and petty Province.”—We sometimes accidentally perceive objects by reflection in a glass, which are carefully concealed from our direct view.—From the little attention which the English Ministry pay to the defence and protection of this kingdom, we may discover how insignificant Ireland appears in the estimation of the British Cabinet. Yet it seems extraordinary, that their unfortunate experience in one quarter of the globe should have made so little impression upon the memory, or upon the good sense of the English nation.—After the loss of “*the brightest Jewel in the British Crown**,” the remaining gems should be guarded with some increase of care and solicitude.

Ireland is no petty province, for she has an independent legislature.—I mean not to enter into the Sphynx’s riddle of her dependent and independent crown. I judge of her importance from her natural and acquired resources—from her position in Europe—her peculiar sufficiency to her own subsistence—her obvious increase in industry and knowledge—and above all by her sudden transition from apathy to exertion.—Old prejudices in nations, as well as in individuals, remain in the mind, and influence the conduct, long after the circumstances in which they originated are changed. A century ago Ireland

* Lord Chatham’s Speeches.

was a burthen to England, now she is her most useful ally. But whatever may be the relative importance of Ireland in the eyes of a British Minister, it cannot be imagined, that he should in time of danger leave us utterly defenceless; and though his sensibility may not be very acute, it must be roused by our situation.—At a moment when there was general apprehension of an invasion, it was scarcely to be expected, that his economy should, in opposition to all other motives, have decided him to reject an establishment of acknowledged and essential utility in the defence of the kingdom.

Your Lordship will not, I hope, imagine, that after the experience I have had, I am yet weak enough to suppose, that any thing I can urge in favour of the utility or policy of this establishment, will make any impression upon Ministerial minds.—I address myself to the public—to those in Ireland, who have something to protect. These things pass like a dream from the memory of men high in office. They are taught to believe, that their approbation is the measure of all excellence, and that their opinion necessarily guides the judgment of all who are their inferiors in rank.

The language of adulation deceives the ear, and the habits of elevated station deceive the eye of the great; every thing is measured by its relation to some immediate object which occupies their contracted sphere of vision. That very elevation which
should

should give them a commanding view of things, attracts a mist about them, which distorts, and disproportion distant objects. There is also something in power, which operates strangely upon the human heart and understanding, which produces in those who possess it an overweening selfishness, and a callous indifference to the interests and feelings of others. They consider the lives, and talents, and time of mankind, as at their absolute disposal,

“ Un canonier de plus ou de moins qu’importe t’il pourvû que le grand Seignior soit bien servi ! ” exclaimed a Turkish minister to the Baron de Tott— This shocks us from a Grand Vizier, but when there is question of sending thousands to *encounter a plague*, the same sentiment from a British Minister does not astonish us.

It is in vain to attempt to change feelings which are the combined result of situation and habit.— Our language must be adapted to the comprehension and dispositions of those whom we address.— Talk not then to men in office of the virtue, the wisdom, the public utility, of such and such conduct, but talk to them of its connexion with their private policy.— This is a language which they perfectly understand. — Calculate the probability of their personal disgrace or danger, and you catch their ear as by the sudden influence of a charm.— They listen with the superstitious eagerness of men in love with Fortune, who know her fickleness,

and

and who feel how much they depend upon her smiles.

It requires but little skill in prophecy, to foresee that in these times of danger, when the minds of numbers are awake to the conduct of government, no Minister will long maintain his power, who trusts to the left-handed wisdom of duplicity, who is prodigal in all that concerns the interests of his own party, and economic, not to say avaricious, in all that concerns the happiness of a people, and the safety of a kingdom.—The character of the Minister, contrasted with that of his distinguished political rival in a period original and unprecedented, makes the danger of this little paltry and futile policy, the more evident and palpable — that such conduct may not be too fatally extended to the rejection of other projects for the defence and safety of the kingdom, it may not be without its use impartially to delineate the characters of those who guide the empire.

Two rival Statesmen divide the opinion of the public—opposite in temperament, education, system, and in whatever constitutes character.—Shaded by the prophetic mantle of his father, there was in the first appearance of the one something of sublimity; splendid abilities, unusual sanctity of manners, bespoke and justified the confidence of his country.—Raised at once to a high station, pressed by business that must be instantly performed, he was obliged

liged to accept of assistance from men hackneyed in the ways of office, and by degrees was compelled to relinquish the favourite honorable resolutions of his youth.—He did not consort with men who marked his first deviations.—Courtiers are not always furnished with a moral plumb rule to adjust the rectitude of a friend, though they sometimes apply it rather awkwardly to detect the obliquity of an enemy.—The unbounded confidence of the public tempted the frailty of his nature, and he scrupled not to impose a little upon *the people*, who had imposed so much upon themselves.

The other Statesman had a character to make.—With the exuberant animation which usually accompanies genius, he ran the eccentric round of dissipation.—But this to him was a short and salutary experiment: the same social nature at his first entrance upon his political career led him to tolerate, perhaps to imitate his companions: but his taste and judgment soon disdained the mean arts and fordid objects of inferior ambition.—His moral character has been gradually formed by the conviction of his understanding, and perhaps not a single year has been added to his life, which has not added to his virtue.

The philosophic eye will perceive the influence of character not only in the conduct of affairs, but in the deliberation of the senate.—When the melodious voice of the Minister steals upon the ear,
when

when he leads us "through many a bout of lengthened sweetness," far away from the object which we fought, we feel as if our understandings had been convinced, when our senses only have been gratified.—When he assumes the tone of argument, we admire the lucid order, the beautiful connexion, the high polish of his oration. It is true the parts are put together with dexterity; the joinings and defects in the materials are exquisitely concealed by workmanship. The varnish is so delicate, that no rude hand ventures to deface it.—But when it yields to time, and reveals the wretched materials which it covered, we are amazed to see so much skill and ingenuity bestowed upon such a worthless fabric.

His opponent rises—We forget the orator, and sympathize with every feeling of the man.—With the energy of a master-hand, he strikes out at every blow a distinct idea.—He never spins the slight gossamer of sophistry, to catch the feeble and fluttering attention; but with Herculean nerve, we see him forge out link by link the chain of demonstration.—There is no pause, no respite, till the massive length is complete and rivetted round the mind.

In a commercial nation, it is natural to look more to the financier than to the Statesman; but these are not times when fiscal abilities can save an empire. Ministers who have furnished their memories with statistical tables, and all the detail of diplomatic learning, are well qualified in times of tranquillity to trim the
the

the balance of Europe, and to calculate its nice lib-
 erations : but in the hour of tempest and danger we
 abandon these refined speculations : we look for a
 Statesman, who when he finds himself hurried on by
 the irresistible current of affairs, governs himself by a
 bolder prudence, and who whilst the storm rages,
 dares to rely on the rapid suggestions of a vigorous
 and comprehensive mind.

I have been insensibly led beyond my original in-
 tention, and have touched upon what I hope to
 make the subject of a future letter.—The extent of
 your Lordship's indulgence, though I have tried it,
 I scarcely know, but I hope you will pardon me for
 endeavouring to mix something of higher import,
 with what might appear only a personal concern.—
 The same apology will I hope be accepted by the
 public, who will pardon me for having intruded
 myself so long upon their attention.—I consider the
 transaction I have laid before them, rather as a pub-
 lic than a private concern.—Had I merely experi-
 enced a vulgar disappointment in ambition, had I
 simply discovered duplicity in a court, I should not
 think the novelty of my discovery, or the bitterness
 of my disappointment, would much interest the pub-
 lic. But surely the public has some interest in know-
 ing, what offers are made to government for the de-
 fence of the country, how those offers are received,
 and what treatment an individual meets with, who,
 without the common motives of emolument or am-
 bition, applies himself with some perseverance, and,

as it is allowed even by those who reject his services, with some success, to perfect an object of national utility. The few who study politics as a science, who consider events not so much as to their absolute as their relative magnitude, who mark the spirit of the times, the temper of those who govern, and of those who submit, will from slight omens draw important auguries.—“Take a straw,” says Selden, “and throw it up into the air, you may see “by that, which way the wind is, which you shall “not do by casting up a stone.”

Even those, who do not call themselves politicians, may find some advantage in looking into public measures. The habit of considering, and judging of affairs improves the sagacity of *the people*.—The letters of Secretaries and Commanders in Chief can be contemplated at leisure and without awe in a printed form, and persons who are apt to feel their understandings bewildered by the mysteries of office, when the veil is fairly drawn, will be glad to discover that plain common sense is competent to discuss and decide *.—Whilst every thing can be fully laid before the public, there is no danger that the people should be oppressed; and those who attack the liberties of mankind, have more to dread from the invisible union of enlightened minds, than

* I appeal to every man's recollection of his feelings upon the publication of Mr. Boyd's negotiation with Mr. Pitt, and of Lord Fitzwilliam's and Admiral Cornwallis's with other members of administration.

from all the cabals of faction, or all the leagues of ignorant force.

Cardinal Mazarine, when he heard any comments upon his measures, used to exclaim—"Let them *say* what they please, provided they let me *do* what *I* please."—The people have more reason to be content with their share in this division of power, than the short-sighted politician apprehended. The despotic Cardinal's maxim, with a trifling alteration, may be justly adopted as an axiom by a free nation.

"Let us say and write, whatever constitutional liberty allows, and let Ministers attempt what they dare."

I have the honor to be,

my Lord,

with the greatest respect,

your Lordship's

obliged and humble servant,

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH.

*Edgeworthstown,
December 13th, 1796.*

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

Edgeworth's Town, Jan. 17, 1797.

ON Friday the 30th of December, at night, I received authentic intelligence that the enemy were on our coasts.—I immediately sent a servant express to Mr. Pelham with a letter offering to erect the Tellographs, which I have in Dublin, on any line that government should direct, and to bring *my own men along with me*; or to join the army with my portable Tellographs to reconnoitre and convey intelligence.

My servant was sent back with a note from Mr. Pelham, containing his compliments, and the promise of a speedy answer.—No answer has ever reached me.

Upon such an emergency I could, with the improvements which I have mentioned in my letter of the 19th of September, and with the assistance of my friends, have established a communication be-

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tween

tween Dublin and any of our ports before the French fleet had left the coast; and had my offer been accepted, it should not have cost government a shilling.

I did not feel mortified at this neglect, because I was sensible, that the displeasure of the public would not light upon me; but I felt, and feel much concern in being deprived of an opportunity of alleviating the anxiety and distress of thousands, and of saving an enormous expence to this country; I have been informed from various quarters that a Tellograph has been most earnestly wished for; danger quickens the perceptions of individuals to national interests, and every practicable scheme of defence is considered with an eagerness very different from the apathy of general safety.—Government had not the same feelings as individuals, or it would have taken means to inform the people with certainty and expedition: nor is it to be expected, that in a system supported by patronage any fortunate opportunity for profusion should be suffered to escape—whether the anxiety of the Castle was proportioned to the real difficulty or danger, I am at a loss to conjecture; of this however I am certain, that the confused, and contradictory reports published under the sanction of Government, and which have appeared at second-hand in the English papers, cannot upon a refusal convey any agreeable sensations either to themselves or to the people:

ple: the same narrowness of design is obvious in every thing, the same confidence in fortune, and the same indifference about the future.—The critic was not much mistaken, who asserted, that the most interesting circumstance in the tragedy of Iphigenia in Euripides is the direction of the winds. Which of the heathen Deities we have propitiated in our favour I cannot tell; it certainly was not Mercury!

I shall not expatiate upon the advantages that might have been obtained, and the evils which might have been avoided, by another system; because the feelings of individuals, and the good sense of the public, will suggest more than I could enumerate or imagine. I shall only submit a few queries to the consideration of Government, and to the judgment of the country.

How many hours elapsed from the first appearance of the enemy on the coast to the time that it was known by Government *?

How many minutes would have intervened had a Tellograph been previously established?

* An accurate journal of the weather is kept at my house, one column of which has for several months been appropriated to register the comparative clearness of the atmosphere; and but one period of 24 hours has been too hazy for my Tellograph since the 26th of December.

How many days were wasted in fruitless wishes for an English fleet?

In how many hours could a message have been sent from Cork by Donaghadee to London, had the proposed plan of communication been adopted?

Would it have been entirely agreeable to the English ministry to have received immediate intelligence from Ireland upon a late occasion?

Would it have been necessary with a Tellograph to have given such contradictory orders to the troops, to have harassed them with forced marches, and to have discouraged them with countermarches? or did not these orders plainly proceed from the want of intelligence and from indecision?

Would the general alarm have produced the same anxiety amongst individuals if intelligence had been conveyed from hour to hour with expedition?

Would the same pecuniary embarrassments, the same distress, the same stagnation of trade, the same bankruptcies have been the consequence of an attempted invasion, if immediate communication could have been kept up between distant correspondents, and had the real situation of affairs been constantly and regularly laid before the public?

What

What will be the additional expence charged to the public for the movements occasioned by hurry and uncertainty ?

Will not every neglect, and every false statement be known in a few days by the enemy, as well as by our friends ?

Might not the English Minister have been spared the ridicule of haranguing upon the improbability of an attack upon Ireland at the very time that the enemy was upon its coast ?

Was it a stroke of humour in Mr. Pitt, or a glimpse of his father's prophetic spirit, to say (December 30th), " I should not be surpris'd if in " their rage for annexing territory which does not " belong to them, they (the French) should make " Ireland part of France, one, and indivisible ?"

May not the favourite policy of divide and conquer, eventually be reversed, and become divide and *be conquered* ?

May not the Greek proverb, " half is better than the whole," be misapplied in governing a country ?

Should not the errors of the past be lessons for the future ? Or, after all, will it be thought, that as the
the

the enemy have been once upon our coast, for that
very reason they can never come again.

Must we not admire the piety of our Chief Go-
vernor, who, in his message to Parliament,

“ Like the good bishop with a meeker air,

“ Admits, and leaves us *Providence's* care!”

THE END.